

USSN. 10/661,630
Examiner: Michalsky, Gerald A
Group A.U.: 3753

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

shown in accordance with 37 CFR §1.121(c)

1. (currently amended): A device for adjusting the degree of vacuum in an apparatus for collecting substances by suction, comprising: a chamber; a valve with a body that is provided with a sealing surface and with a first air flow port connected to atmosphere at one end and to said chamber at the other end; a vacuum source, said chamber being connected to said vacuum source and to said collection apparatus; a permanent magnet; supporting means associated with the body of the valve in an adjustable position so as to allow arrangement of said magnet at different distances with respect to said sealing surface; and a flow control element provided so as to be attracted into a closed position in abutment against said sealing surface by action of said magnet, wherein said supporting means comprises a ring that is associated with the body of the valve by way of a thread thereof, said ring comprising ribs connected to a central hub for accommodating said magnet, said ribs forming air passage channels.

2. (canceled)

3. (original): The device of claim 2, further comprising a series of numerical indications provided on the ring for supporting the permanent magnet, that appear selectively through a window provided in the valve body following rotation of said ring in order to provide information regarding a degree of vacuum provided by said device.

4. (original): The device of claim 1, comprising an abutment for stopping opening motion of the flow control element in such a position as to ensure that with the flow control element fully open air flow encounters no resistance in passing through the valve.

5. (currently amended): A device for adjusting the degree of vacuum in an apparatus for collecting substances by suction, comprising: a chamber; a valve with

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a body that is provided with a sealing surface and with a first air flow port connected to atmosphere at one end and to said chamber at the other end; a vacuum source, said chamber being connected to said vacuum source and to said collection apparatus; a permanent magnet; supporting means associated with the body of the valve in an adjustable position so as to allow arrangement of said magnet at different distances with respect to said sealing surface; a flow control element provided so as to be attracted into a closed position in abutment against said sealing surface by action of said magnet; and comprising indication means for indicating the flow of air through the valve for connection to the atmosphere.

6. (original): The device of claim 5, wherein said means for indicating the flow of air through the valve is constituted by a protrusion associated with the valve body that comprises a U-shaped duct connected, at an end of a first branch of the duct, to the first, atmosphere air flow port on a flow control element side and connected, at an end of a second branch of the duct, to the chamber connected to the vacuum source and to the collection apparatus, and a body accommodated in said second branch that is adapted to be conveyed by air flow that enters from the valve from a position at a base of the U-shaped duct assumed by the body in the absence of air flow to a position that faces a window formed in a wall of said second duct branch so as to be visible from outside.

7. (original): The device of claim 5, wherein said means for indicating the flow of air through the valve is constituted by a protrusion associated with the valve body that comprises a U-shaped duct connected, at an end of a first branch of the duct, to the first, atmosphere air flow port on a flow control element side and connected, at an end of a second branch of the duct, to the chamber connected to the vacuum source and to the collection apparatus, and a water mass provided on a bottom of said U-shaped duct made of transparent material, so that air flow causes bubbling that is visible from outside.

8. (original): The device of claim 5, wherein said means for indicating the flow of air through the valve is constituted by a duct that is associated with an end of

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the first, atmosphere air flow port on a side of the chamber that is connected to the vacuum source and to the collection apparatus, and a body arranged in said duct so as to be carried by air flow from a position at a base of the duct, which the body assumes in the absence of air flow, to an overlying position, which is visible from outside through a window formed in a wall of said duct.

9. (original): The device of claim 8, wherein the duct for accommodating the body adapted to be carried by the air flow has a cylindrical cross-sectional shape, with a window formed in the wall that is open.

10. (original): The device of claim 8, wherein the duct for accommodating the body adapted to be carried by the air flow is conical, with a window formed in the wall that is closed by way of transparent material.